Import of edible oil

1603. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether edible oil imports are likely to rise in the crop year to October, with winter oilseed production having fallen from a year earlier;

(b) if so, whether due to poor production, Government are considering to import more edible oils this year;

(c) if so, what is the target set for import of edible oils; and

(d) what are the steps being taken to improve edible oil production?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) There is a persistent gap between demand and domestic supply of edible oils. The domestic supply depends on oilseed production which has declined substantially according to estimates of Ministry of Agriculture. Hence the net domestic availability of edible oils is expected to be less than the last year. The Government, with a view to ensure availability of edible oils in the domestic market, has allowed import of edible oils except coconut oil under Open General Licence (OGL). As such, the import of edible oils would depend upon the commercial judgement of the importers. There is no proposal, at present, to import edible oils on Government account.

(d) Some of the steps taken and efforts made to increase the indigenous production of oilseeds and hence of edible oils include:

(i) A Centrally Sponsored Oilseeds Production Programme is implemented in 25 State covering 395 selected Districts to increase the production of oilseeds/edible oils in the country.

(ii) A Technology Mission on Oilseeds is in place to harness best production, processing and management technology.

(iii) Intensification of research efforts to increase the production of oilseeds.

(iv) Increasing the areas under non-traditional oilseeds crops, like Soyabean and Sunflower and exploitation of oilseeds of tree and forest origin, rice bran etc.

(v) Setting up of necessary processing and infrastructural facilities to keep pace with the production programme of oilseeds.

(vi) Assistance for oil palm development.

(vii) Better incentives to producers through fixation of Minimum Support Price (MSP) of major oilseeds.

(viii) Use of indigenous oils in the manufacture of Vanaspati to at least 25% of the production, on a monthly basis, is mandatory, at present. Higher use of expeller Mustard oil in the manufacture of Vanaspati up to 30% has also been allowed. The objective is to incentives the farmers in terms of better returns for their production.

(ix) In order to harmonise the interest of domestic oilseeds growers, consumers and processors and to regulate imports of edible oils to the extent possible, the duty structure on edible oils is reviewed from time to time.

Export of foodgrains

†1604. PROF. M. M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have fixed any target for exporting foodgrains to various countries during the period 2001-02 and 2002-03;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of the success achieved in the field of export of foodgrains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA): (a) and (b) No Specific targets for exports were fixed during 2001-02 and 2002-03.

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†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.